

in Oklahoma City made after the terrible bombing there. It read, "A society that makes war against its police had better learn to make friends with criminals." That's the fact.

I'm sorry I can't be with you in person today, but I want you to have no doubt I am still standing shoulder to shoulder with you in the battle against crime and violence. It threatens us all every day, every night, and you're trying

to do something about it. As long as you are, I'll be with you for as long as I'm here.

Thank you, and God bless you all.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:45 p.m. by satellite from Room 459 of the Old Executive Office Building to the FOP conference in Virginia Beach, VA.

## Statement on Proposed Telecommunications Reform Legislation *August 1, 1995*

My administration is committed to enactment of a telecommunications reform bill in this Congress. Such legislation is needed to stimulate investment, promote competition, provide open access to information networks, strengthen and improve universal service, and provide for flexible regulations for this important industry. Consumers should receive the benefits of lower prices, better quality, and greater choices in their telephone and cable services, and they should continue to benefit from a diversity of voices and viewpoints in radio, television, and the print media.

Unfortunately, H.R. 1555, as reported by the Commerce Committee and amended by the managers' amendment, does not reach any of these goals. Instead of promoting investment and competition, it promotes mergers and concentration of power. Instead of promoting open access and diversity of content and viewpoints, it would allow fewer people to control greater numbers of television, radio, and newspaper outlets in every community.

H.R. 1555 with the managers' amendment would:

- allow a single owner to acquire television stations that can reach 50 percent of the Nation;

- allow the acquisition of an unlimited number of radio stations in every community and across the Nation;

- repeal the newspaper/broadcast and broadcast/cable cross-ownership bans that currently exist;

- permit the Bell Operating Companies to offer long distance service before there is real competition in local service, with less-than-minimum structural safeguards and without requiring a determination by the Department of Justice that entry will not impede competition;

- allow an excessive number of in-region buyouts between telephone companies and cable operators, substituting consolidation for competition and leaving consumers in rural areas and small towns with no rate protection in most cases and no foreseeable expectation of competition;

- deregulate cable programming services and equipment rates before cable operators face real competition and without providing any consumer protection provision after deregulation;

- preempt the States from implementing certain rate regulation schemes and opening their local phone markets to certain types of competition as they choose; and

- not include the V-chip proposal the Senate adopted.

The cumulative effect of these provisions would be to harm competition and to weaken the benefits to the public. If H.R. 1555 with the managers' amendment is sent to me without deletion or revision of a significant number of these provisions I will be compelled to veto it in the best interests of the public and our national economic well-being.